



Truly Unique Trulli Homes By Beth Frede



Photo: <https://www.istockphoto.com/photos/puglia>

Note: **One VAKTivity uses a gallon-sized sensory bag with colored hair gel.**

The diverse climates, populations, resources, and TOPOGRAPHY (physical features of an area) dictate the type of homes found in different regions of the world. From stately, centuries-old castles in the UNITED KINGDOM to open-air WURLIES (temporary hut-like shelters) used by Australian ABORIGINAL people, DWELLINGS (structures where people live) are as varied as the people who live in them. Today, we'll focus on some curious little ABODES (houses) in southeastern ITALY called TRULLI homes.

SPELL: DIVERSE REGIONS CURIOUS

Today we're talking about what type of homes? **TRULLI**

In which part of Italy are trulli homes found? **SOUTHEASTERN**

The word in the paragraph meaning structures where people live is what?
DWELLINGS

The temporary open-air shelters used by Australian Aboriginal people are called what? **WURLIES**

I mentioned four factors in different regions of the world that dictate the type of dwellings people live in. Name two. **CLIMATE, POPULATION, RESOURCES, TOPOGRAPHY**

What is another type of home not mentioned in the paragraph? **MOBILE HOME, APARTMENT, PENTHOUSE, etc.**

Name a country in the United Kingdom. **ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, WALES, NORTHERN IRELAND**

Trulli homes are found primarily in **ALBEROBELLO** in the **PUGLIA** (pronounced **POO-lee-uh**) region of Italy. If we picture Italy as boot-shaped, Alberobello is located at the top of the foot. Trulli homes date back to the 16th century. Some historians **THEORIZE** (speculate) that the homes were built by **GREEKS** who settled the area. These **EDIFICES** (buildings) resemble early Greek funeral monuments. Historians say the name Trulli comes either from the Greek word **THOLOS** or from the **BYZANTINE** word, **TORULLOS**.



Picture credit: Travel Map of the Region of Puglia in Italy by James Martin

Spell: THEORIZE CENTURY HISTORIANS

What did I say Italy is shaped like? **A BOOT**

Alberobello is located in what part of the boot? **THE TOP OF THE FOOT**

What nationality were the people whom historians believed had settled Arberobello? **GREEK**

I read that trulli homes resemble Greek funeral ____. **MONUMENTS**

The name Trulli comes either from the Greek word tholos or from the **BYZANTINE** word, ____. **TORULLOS**.

Trulli homes date back to when? **16th CENTURY**

Where in Italy did I say trulli homes are primarily found? PUGLIA REGION, ALBEROBELLO

What's the capital of Italy? ROME

VAKT: In the picture above, point to the part of the boot where you'd find Trulli homes.



Photo from www.italymagazine.com

So what gives the trulli houses their CHARACTERISTIC look? Also known as BEEHIVE houses, these round, hut-like structures are made of WHITEWASHED limestone, and topped with CONICAL (cone-shaped) stone roofs. At most, they're 9 feet wide, and 6½ feet tall from the floor to where the vaulted ceiling begins. Although made of stone, the trulli were constructed using no plaster, MORTAR, or bonding materials of any kind. Stone walls and roof, one door, and just a few tiny windows meant the trulli were pretty dark inside!

SPELL: CHARACTERISTIC CEILING VAULTED

The top of the trulli homes are what shape? CONICAL

The body of the trulli homes are made of whitewashed what? LIMESTONE

The trulli resemble what structure built by insects? BEEHIVE

Trulli are made of stone, but without what to hold the stones together?

MORTAR, PLASTER, BONDING MATERIALS

Write an equation to show how wide the trulli are in inches.

$12 \times 9 = 108$ INCHES

Name another bonding material used in construction. HOT MELT, ACRYLIC, EPOXY ADHESIVES, SILICONE, RESIN

What is something you couldn't do easily in a trulli that you can do in your home?

Atop each trulli's domed roof sits another DISTINCTIVE feature: the "PINNACOLO", the Italian word for PINNACLE. These FINIALS, or ARCHITECTURAL decorations, were commonly shaped like a disk, ball, cone, bowl, or POLYHEDRON (a many-sided solid figure). Each TRULLISTO (STONEMASON specializing in trulli construction) would add his own unique pinnacolo to the trulli he built. This was like the stonemason's SIGNATURE and allowed people to identify who built which trulli.

Spell: DISTINCTIVE PINNACLE SIGNATURE
The paragraph I read describes a finial as a ____ ____? ARCHITECTURAL DECORATION

I mentioned a many-sided solid figure that is called a what?
POLYHEDRON

Name two other shapes commonly used for the finials on top of the trulli.
DISK, BALL, CONE, BOWL

What were the trulli builders called? TRULLISTO, STONEMASONS

What is something that people commonly put their signature on?

VAKT: On the sensory bag, use your finger to draw a cone with a ball "pinnacolo" on top.



Photo: www.understandingitaly.com

Although the beehive structures of Alberobello might EVOKE images of a FANTASYLAND, the trulli were not built for charm but for PRACTICALITY. They were originally constructed to be temporary STOREHOUSES or SHELTER for peasant farmers. Additionally, the LANDOWNERS upon

whose property the trulli were built wanted to avoid paying taxes and liked that the structures were easy to quickly DISMANTLE before the tax collector came calling!

Spell: FANTASYLAND EVOKE TEMPORARY
In this paragraph, I said that trulli houses were not built for what? CHARM
I read that trulli houses were not built for charm, but for what?
PRACTICALITY
What did landowners want to avoid doing? PAYING TAXES
I read that the landowners liked the trulli style homes because they were
easy to what? DISMANTLE
The trulli were originally built to be what? SHELTER, STOREHOUSES
What's another word or term for dismantle? TAKE APART, DESTROY,
CRUSH

Another PRUDENT (sensible) aspect of trulli construction relates to water collection. Alberobello and surrounding areas are built on a KARST PLATEAU (an elevated plain).

This is a topography characterized by underground caves and SINKHOLES that form when SOLUBLE (dissolvable) rocks like LIMESTONE or DOLOMITE break down. The caves and sinkholes cause rain to drain away, leaving little to no water above ground.



The Castellana Caves in Puglia, Italy. Photo: www.pugliaparadise.com

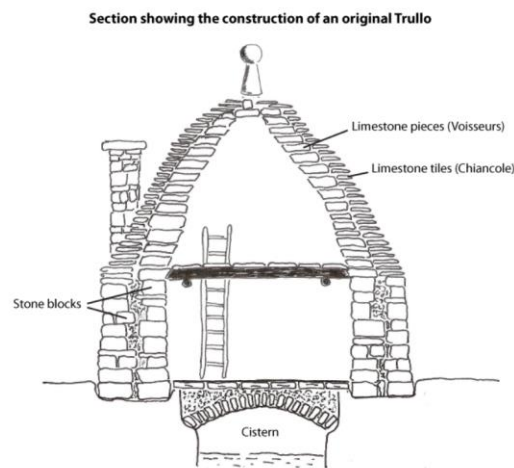
Spell: DISSOLVE SOLUBLE SURROUNDING
The word that I said means "land feature" is what? TOPOGRAPHY
The topographical feature of soluble rocks dissolving underground and leaving sinkholes and caves behind is called a ____ _____. KARST PLATEAU
Caves and sinkholes caused ____ to drain away, leaving little or no water above ground. RAIN
What is one of the soluble rocks from the text? LIMESTONE, DOLOMITE

What's another word for prudent or sensible? WISE, CLEVER

Would you like to explore an underground cave? In a sentence or two, why or why not?

Because the topography resulted in a lack of water, the trulli ARCHITECTS had to use their **INGENUITY** (cleverness) to ensure that people would have a **SUFFICIENT** water supply. Their solution was to dig a **CISTERN** (underground water tank) beneath where each of the trulli would be built. The ceiling of the cistern **EFFECTIVELY** became the floor of the house. Every trulli had its own cistern, giving each home its own water **SUPPLY**.

Drawing from www.understandingitaly.com



Spell: ARCHITECTS

SUFFICIENT

EFFECTIVELY

The architects' solution to the lack of water was to build what under each trulli? CISTERN

A cistern is an underground what? WATER TANK

The ceiling of each cistern became the ___ of the house. FLOOR

In the lesson, I said that ingenuity was the quality of being what? CLEVER, INVENTIVE

What is a word that means the opposite of "solution"? PROBLEM

Today, TOURISTS come from all over the world to experience the region of Alberobello and its unusual trulli structures. Some trulli are still INHABITED by locals, some house RESTAURANTS and shops, while others have been RESTORED and CONVERTED into high-end rustic vacation rentals. There are only about 1600 trulli left. Since the 1900s, Trulli owners have been

REQUIRED to follow strict rules set by the Alberobello Town Council to preserve these historic structures. With care and attention, these unique homes could be around for centuries to come.



Photo: <https://arquitecturayempresa.es/>

Spell: UNIQUE PRESERVE INHABITED

The Alberobello Town ___ established rules to preserve the trulli.

COUNCIL

Who did I say comes from all over the world to see Alberobello?

TOURISTS

Some trulli are homes, some are vacation rentals, and others are what?

RESTAURANTS, SHOPS

Other trulli have been ___ and are now high-end vacation rentals.

RESTORED, CONVERTED

When did the Alberobello Town Council set strict rules to preserve Trulli homes? THE 1900s

About how many trulli are left? 1600

Creative Writing:

If you were going to build your own trulli house, what color would you want it to be and why?

If you were going to live in a trulli house, what is one thing you would bring with you to make it cozy?

If you were going to design your own trulli to live in, what would it look like? Who, if anyone, would live with you? And what would you include to make it feel like "home sweet home"?

VAKT: Watch this video to take a look inside a trulli house.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_iy0BrABEzo

Beth Frede is an S2C Practitioner based in New Hampshire where she lives with her husband and dog. She loves painting, puttering in the kitchen, and learning about new things while writing lessons.

Resources:

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